AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Listing of claims:

1. (Previously Presented) A rolled cone manufacturing apparatus, comprising:

a concave half and a convex half which form a cavity inside when combined with each other, a cross section of the cavity having a circular shape in a direction orthogonal to axes of the concave half and the convex half; and

supporting means which rotatably supports the convex half, on condition that the axis of the concave half is aligned with the axis of the convex half, said supporting means being openable and closable, and pushing, on at least three points, an outer periphery of a part of the convex half protruding from the concave half onto the axis, when said supporting means is closed.

2. (Currently Amended) The rolled cone manufacturing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein, the supporting means includes (i) opening and closing means for, when opened, releasing support of the axis of the convex half, while, when closed, supporting the axis of the convex half, and (ii) locking means for keeping the opening and closing means closed.

3. (Original) The rolled cone manufacturing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein, positions of supporting points of the supporting means are determined in such a manner as to form either (I) a polygon encompassing the axis of the convex half, by connecting points where the supporting means contacts an outer periphery of a part of the convex half protruding from the concave half, or, (II) when the supporting means functions as a sliding bearing, either a circle around the axis or a closed curved figure by connecting arcs centering on the axis.

4. (Original) The rolled cone manufacturing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein rolling objects are provided on respective supporting points of the supporting means.

5. (Original) The rolled cone manufacturing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the convex half is rotatable when the supporting means is closed, while the convex half is movable toward the axis when the supporting means is open.

6. (Original) The rolled cone manufacturing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the concave half has an opening part through which the convex half is fitted in, said supporting means partly protruding inwardly of the opening part when said supporting means is closed.

7. (Original) The rolled cone manufacturing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the concave half has an opening part through which the convex half is fitted in, a slit-type inlet connected to the cavity is formed at a side of the concave half, and a guiding member to cover a surrounding of the opening part is provided around the inlet and the opening part.

8. (Original) The rolled cone manufacturing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein, when cross sections of the concave half and the convex half are circular in a direction orthogonal to the axes of the concave half and the convex half, the concave half and the convex half are conical-shaped, truncated-cone shaped, or cylinder-shaped.

9. (Original) The rolled cone manufacturing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the supporting means is a loop-shaped member which is openable and closable.

10. (Original) The rolled cone manufacturing apparatus according to claim 9, wherein, each of the supporting means is a link mechanism including a toggle mechanism, said link mechanism serving as opening and closing means, locking means, and a guiding member for guiding a material sheet into the concave half.

11. (Original) The rolled cone manufacturing apparatus according to claim 9, wherein the supporting means includes, provided that a part where the loop of the supporting

means is cut off is referred to as a split part, a positioning and fixing member for positioning and fixing the split part in place, when the supporting means is closed, said positioning and fixing member serving as a guiding member when the material sheet is brought into the concave half.